



Greetings from the Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department!

I am posting this first Planning Director's Newsletter on our department's webpage (www.ci.lincoln.ne.us and then click on City of Lincoln, then Planning Department) and sending it to a list of several hundred people compiled by the department. This list includes elected and appointed government officials, local members of the development industry and representatives of various local businesses, civic and neighborhood organizations.



Marvin Krout

Your livelihood and/or personal life is affected to a surprising degree by what my colleagues and I are doing here in the County-City Building. We owe it to the citizens of Lincoln and Lancaster County to communicate better and to listen carefully to your comments and suggestions. This newsletter is just one way that we hope to improve communication about planning issues in the community.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCING

When I was considering this job last summer, it was expected that **impact fees** would be enacted before my start date. That was not the case, however, and along with many of you, I have received quite an education on the subject over the past several months. The newly adopted ordinance and fee schedule can be found on our webpage, along with answers to frequently asked questions, like "When do they go into effect?" and "What kinds of developments are exempted?" If you have questions about impact fees, or your board or organization would like someone to come to one of your meetings to discuss this topic, please e-mail Steve Henrichsen in our office at shenrichsen@ci.lincoln.ne.us or call him at 441-6374.

However you may feel about impact fees, you probably know that they are just a relatively small portion of the new revenues that will need to be found in order to construct the infrastructure of

new roads and highways, water and wastewater facilities, stormwater improvements, parks and trails, and other improvements that are proposed to keep pace with anticipated new growth, plus replace aging and substandard facilities in the older parts of Lincoln. Several work groups appointed by the Mayor under the umbrella of the **Infrastructure Finance Committee** are looking at how best to bridge the "gap" between the cost of these improvements and the projected funds available based on current revenue streams. That Committee's work is expected to be completed by early May in a report to the Mayor and City Council. If you have questions or suggestions, contact Kent Morgan in our office at kmorgan@ci.lincoln.ne.us or call him at 441-7491.



ACREAGES

The Comprehensive Plan called for several studies to be completed later this year about "acreages" -- large lot subdivisions in rural Lancaster County. We have contracted with one consultant firm to complete a review of the fiscal costs and revenues generated by acreage-type developments. Another firm will undertake a concurrent study on "build-through", to determine if and how these large lot subdivisions can be designed so as to minimize the difficulties of

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later being annexed and re-subdivided into urban density lots as the city grows out to meet them. The third study is a staff effort to develop a scoring system that indicates what land is most suitable for acreage-type development. If you have questions or suggestions concerning any of these studies, contact Mike DeKalb in our office at mdekalb@ci.lincoln.ne.us or call him at 441-6370.



PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS

"Process improvements" in Planning are part of a multi-department initiative announced last month by Mayor Wesely to streamline the development review process. Improvements can be made by re-engineering our workflows, making better use of available technology, and re-evaluating our priorities. As a newcomer with experiences in other cities, I see a number of opportunities to simplify and reduce the number of steps in our review processes, reduce timeframes required for decisions, speed access to data that staff needs to review applications, and



improve communications with and between our various "customers". This community offers a wonderful quality of life, as my family and I have quickly learned. The City of Lincoln and Lancaster County have managed growth very carefully and effectively in the past and attracted national recognition for our success. But global competition, technological progress and changes in demographics and lifestyle preferences require us all to be nimble and adapt appropriately to change in order to continue flourishing.

If you want . . .

- ☒ more detailed information on particular subjects, please contact the Planning Department.
- ☒ to invite me or someone else from our department out to meet with your board or organization or to talk about planning in general or specific topics of concern, please call me 441-7491 or e-mail me at mkroust@ci.lincoln.ne.us.
- ☒ to write to me with any comments or suggestions about the department and its activities, including this newsletter, please feel welcome to do so.

COMMUNICATIONS

This newsletter is a part of a broader effort to improve communications. We have also begun inviting feedback through a customer survey form that is handed out to walk-in customers and attached to applications. We have added a search engine to the department's homepage and are developing a plan to revamp that page and add more information. We are looking at ways to provide



earlier notice on applications and encourage more dialogue between applicants and interested neighbors prior to the official public hearings.

Future newsletters will include updates on the items outlined above, as well as announcements on several new initiatives that are planned for this year. Your continued interest and participation in these initiatives is appreciated and can only improve the results.

If you received this as e-mail, and you prefer not to receive future editions, please reply to this e-mail and type "unsubscribe" in the title line.

Best wishes and stay warm!
Marvin Krout, Director

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